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MARGARET ANNE'S WONDER BOOK



OF VERSE

To my friend
Mrs. J. H. H. H. H. H.
from the author
A. H. H. H. H.

not in Watters 2nd

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H. H. H. H. H.

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Margaret Anne's

**WONDER BOOK
OF VERSE**



Margaret Anne's

**WONDER BOOK
OF VERSE**

Wherein

She wonders 'bout things

(BOOK I)

Lovingly dedicated by the author to Margaret Anne's
Auntie, by marriage, — my wife — whose unselfish
affection brought Margaret Anne to us.

**ALFRED L. MARKS,
Seba Beach, August 10, 1941**

Foreword

A VAST difference in perspective seems to exist between the compilers of certain earlier collections of literature for children and later collections such as "The Book of Knowledge", "Young Folks' Treasury", and "Our Wonder World".

The former, printed on expensive paper with expensive bindings, contained such selections of literature as the ordinary elder would consider to be "good" for children; and they would be "good" for them, if children would only read them and take care that the books were not soiled or torn. The diet was not sufficiently extensive in its range or varied in its content, to keep children interested. There was not enough room for exploring as well as too much insistence upon meticulous care of the volumes themselves.

In the latter category, these difficulties were met by the inclusion of a vast range of carefully chosen subjects, all interesting to children; and the paper, printing, and bindings were made suitable for hard and constant use. In these the children could make their own choice, and were thrilled at the opportunity.

The present series of poems goes further: it seeks to express to himself the curiosity—the wonder—that dwells

in the child's mind, at the different ages of his development, and to find a suitable explanation that is valid and helpful.

This volume speaks of the "wonderings" of children from five to ten years of age and includes a few other selections such as "Stars", "The Meadow-Lark", "Swinging", "Two Little Girls" and "The Bluebird's Wing" that express thoughts the older child possesses but finds difficult to state.

It has been good fun loaning to Margaret Anne and to all children, the words with which to "wonder", as well as to express in wholesome terms the reasonable results of their wondering. If this purpose is appreciated by the public, we may later "wonder" together with youth, through that mysterious but beautiful No-man's Land of Adolescence.

That a useful purpose may be served by this book is the hope of the author.

A. L. MARKS,
Seba Beach, Alberta.
August 10, 1941.

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WONDERING

JUST now, of course, I'm only six,
But shortly, I'll be seven.
I find I'm in a funny fix
And things just mix and mix and mix
Through wondering 'bout Heaven!

There seems so much to wonder at
For folks of six and seven
'Bout things and people, this and that,—
I wonder if the world is flat
And where on earth is Heaven?

But even if I can't just see,
And so must often blunder,
It's lots of fun, it seems to me
To wonder how such things could be,
And so, you see, I wonder.

'bout ME



I WONDER how does Jesus know
'Bout little girls who need Him so?
With Mommy gone and Daddy ill
And Granny's tasks too hard to 'fill
And folks so busy, I can't see
How He got time to think of me!

I'm sure He knows my Mommy's dead
'Cause Auntie Rose and Uncle Fred
Came just when they were needed most—
And I was feeling kind of lost—
And 'dopted me, and now I'm theirs.
Oh my, I'm glad He answers prayers!

'bout BUGS

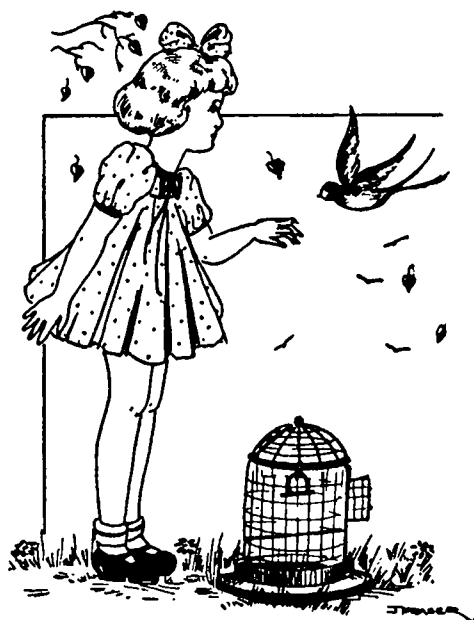


II DON'T know what was their excuse
Or just why bugs began.

I'm sure that they must have some use
Or God just wouldn't turn them loose
To bother beast and man!

When I am playing in the trees
They find out I am there;
For bugs like these and those and these
Come, even walking on their knees,
To get into my hair!

'bout BIRDS



I WONDER how God teaches birds to sing
And how they learn to build their little nests;
How sure and true He tints each burnished wing
And paints the flecks of color on their breasts?

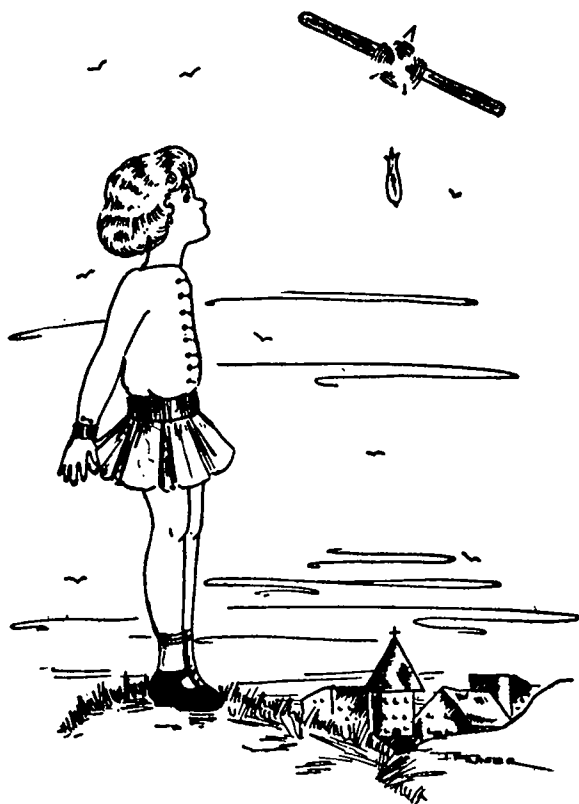
I wonder how He guides them on their way
In lashing storm or darkness of the night,
As certainly as in the brightest day;
And when to rest and when to take their flight?

I wonder if some day I'll know
Why they're allowed to be;
Why they like pie and picnics so,
And want to follow where I go?
Oh well, I'll wait and see!

I wonder how He shows them where to look
To find their food; and how to bring it home
From mold, or stump, or edges of the brook,
To hungry babies wishing them to come?

I'm glad He loves the little birds so well
He shelters and protects them with His love;
And 'cause He cares for birdies, I can tell
It's right to trust our Father up above!

'bout WAR



○ F many things I've wondered at, there's
one that seems to me

Must be the foolishest of all, and one that
should not be:

And that is why when folks grow up, and
want to show they're right

They try to hurt each other and to prove it
with a fight.

Now, just take me and Betty, when it seems
we can't agree,

Why, we just talk it over and find out how
it should be.

My, I'd be 'shamed if we should fight and
pull each other's hair

And all the time keep screaming that the
other wasn't fair!

We've got some dandy neighbors and we're
awful glad to know

That we don't have to fight them just to
prove that it is so.

I wonder, then, why nations do not take
some other way

To settle all their arguments. I'm sure that
it would pay!

'bout CLOUDS



I OFTEN used to wonder how the clouds
got in the sky

So asked my Auntie Jessie, as I watched
them floating by.

She said: "They're made of vapor, as the
water turns to mist

And mist to finer particles when it is
sunshine-kissed."

Since then I've watched them gather and
I've seen them disappear;

Some times they seem a long way off and
other times quite near.

I think the bulging white ones are the
mountains of the sky

And all the little wooly ones might grow up
by and by.

Maybe the ones in layers are the steps the
Angels climb.

I'm sure the big dark-blue ones gather rain
'most all the time.

Yet somehow I don't mind it, and I'll say it
once again:

"Just how could we have rainbows, if there
wasn't any rain?"

But, as I see them forming, and as quickly
go, it seems

Cloud's aren't made of vapour, they are only
made of dreams!

'bout DOGS



I'M sure it makes no diff'rence if your
house is brick or log

You get the same fine loyalty from every
kind of dog.

The shaggy big Newfoundland or the little
chubby pug

The bow-legged English bulldog with his
big outlandish mug

Or Great Dane, or Scotch collie or the snub-
nose Pekinese

Or tiny, wee Chihuahuas just about as big
as fleas;

The various kinds of terriers that scare
kittens into fits,

Or far extended Dachshunds or the
sprightly little Spitz—

You're sure of their affection in the night or
in the day

They always seem to love you when you're
sad or when you're gay;

And, if you're cross or cranky they will try
to understand,

No matter how they may be hurt. I think
they're simply grand!

In all the wheel of friendship I am sure
there's not a cog

More precious to us humans than the
friendship of the dog.

'bout LIFE GUARDS



I WENT to the beach with my Auntie one
day

And put on my swim-suit and started to
play:

The water was fine and I waded far out
And stepped in a hole and was drowned,
just about.

The life-guard came rushing out into the bay

And grabbed me and saved me and I heard
him say:

“Never enter the water, to swim or to play
Unless someone’s with you, to watch all
the way;

For water, like fire, as a servant, can cheer;
But either, as master, we always must fear.
And always, my dear, when you go to the
lake

This warning remember, for happiness’
sake!”

'bout FLOWERS



SOMETIMES when I'm a-sitting up a-top
the garden wall

I wonder which, among the flowers, is
nicest of them all,—

The velvet smoothness of the rose; the
winsome pansy's face;

The silken-petalled holly-hock; the coral
lily's grace;

The spangled, blue delphinium; the
glorious, tinted glad;

The yellow of the marigold,—none dearer
may be had!

But then I see the bluebells hang, a-swinging
in the breeze,

And laughing, brown-eyed-Susans,—and
I'd like to vote for these!

And so, from flower to flower I go, like
hummingbird for honey;

And each is best, and none is worst,—and
that's my testimony!

'bout 'SPRISES



I LIKE to 'sprise the ones I love
By doing something for them.
They think that I'm so small, you see,
They don't 'spect very much of me,
But lots of times I'm thinking of
Nice things so I can 'sprise them.

If I can 'sprise the ones I love
By doing nice things for them,
It makes me shiver, all 'way through—
Is that the way it does to you?—

And makes me feel so good inside
To do such things to 'surprise them.

When we can 'surprise the ones we love
With lovely things to cheer them,
I wonder if the loving deed
Won't reproduce its kindly seed
And bring to them the faith they need
To later on sustain them?

'bout ALLEY CATS



THEY say you're just an alley cat, but I
don't care, do you?

I don't care where you came from, where
you sleep or what you do

To get your food and shelter and I wish
that you would stay

In our old summer kitchen so that you and I
could play.

I wonder how you lost your eye? And did
it hurt you much?

And what's the matter with your back?
And did you use a crutch?

I 'member how that mean old dog that
chased you, bit your tail

And chewed off nearly all of it. Dad said I
turned quite pale.

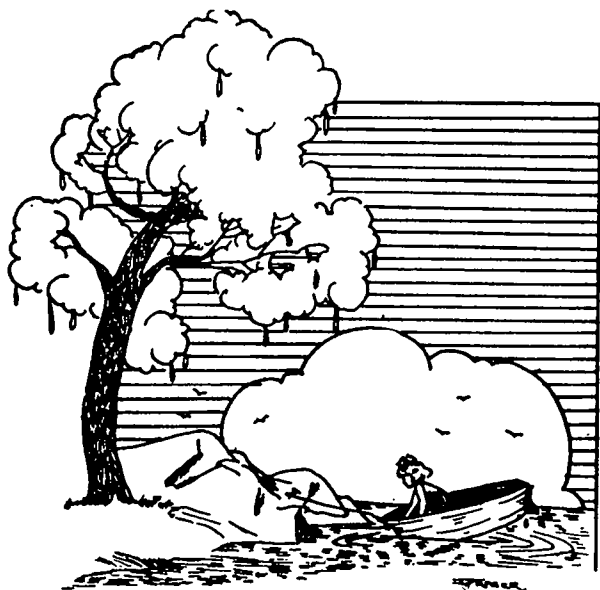
You must be tired of roaming and you need
some place to rest;

And if you'll make your home with me I'm
sure you'll like that best.

There seems so much to wonder at, because
of this and that—

I wish I knew what's best to do about an
alley cat.

'bout LAKES



One day my Auntie mentioned that she
thought we ought to take
Our holidays at Wabamun,—'tis such a
lovely lake;
And Uncle said he had no choice of lakes,
but he would wish
She'd choose a lake not too far off, with lots
and lots of fish;
And Vera, whose new bathing suit looks
very neat and trim,

Said: "Pick a place with lots of beach, where
I can learn to swim."

Lloyd said he had a sail-boat that he wanted
much to try

And Leslie said his glider-plane was ready
now, to fly:

But Betty didn't care so much, if she just
had a chance

To swim and dive and then to have an
orchestra, to dance.

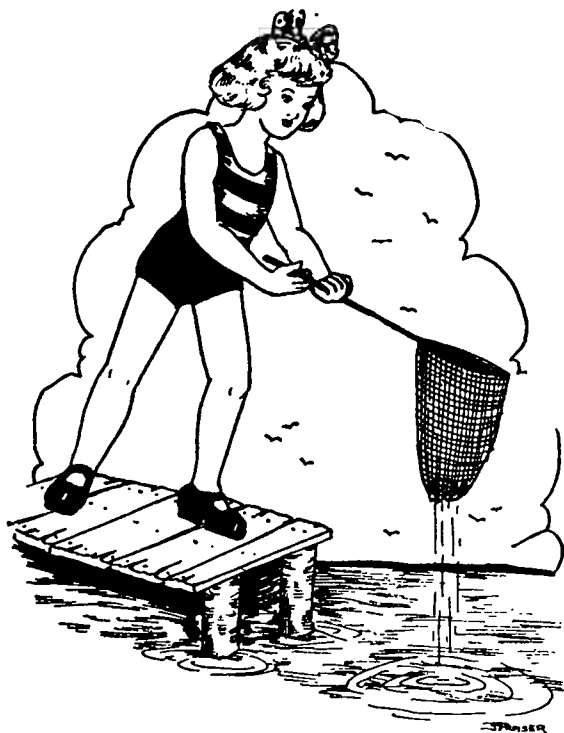
So we all went to Seba, and oh boy, did we
have fun!

We swam and fished and rowed the boat 'til
darkness stole the sun:

But yet I sometimes wonder if there can be
any lake,

Could give you back of happiness, beyond
just what you take!

'bout MINNOWS



I WONDER how the minnows ever get a chance to grow;

They must be most unhappy for they're always hurried so.

The big fish eat the smaller ones and smaller ones eat them;

So all things work together, so it seems, to thus condemn

The minnows to destruction, and they're never sure of life.

Of course they can't enjoy themselves, in
all that rush and strife.

The wee things rush to safety in the shallows
of the lake

To get away from larger fish that follow in
their wake.

How can they know the 'fisher and the mud-
hen and the gull

Are watching o'er the shallows where they
hoped to find a lull?

For safety and companionship they travel
'round in schools,—

But if they want to live I guess they'll have
to change their rules!

I wonder what to do for them? How might I
give them aid?

I'm 'fraid I can't do anything, cause that's
how fish are made;

And, 'spose I could persuade them, they
should try another rule,

And always travel singly,—never swimming
in a school,—

I don't know what would happen, 'til they
gave my scheme a test;

So, guess I shouldn't interfere, for surely
God knows best!

'bout TREES



I WISH that I could understand the
language of the trees

That always start to whisper when awakes
the slightest breeze;

I wonder what they're saying and sometimes
I think I know,

Because they tell the secrets of the places
where they grow.

The spruce that forms the lookout for the
eagle and the hawk

Because it stands alone, it really doesn't
need to talk;

And yet it does, I think, because I'm sure I
heard one say:

"Come out, brave spirits, on this rock that
overlooks the bay;

Come out and get a higher look at life and
love and sky:

See how the clouds look from above; how
eagles learn to fly."

I heard the birch tree boasting of its bark
for making boats;

And willow talk exultantly of: "bark for
whistled notes."

The fir trees mentioned something of "the
quality that lasts"

And called to my attention they were
excellent for masts!

Then spoke the modest aspen, the most
worthless of the trees,

Whose leafy banners tremble even in a tiny
breeze,

And said: "I'm not so precious as the rest,
for bark or wood,

But I don't think the purpose of us trees is
understood.

Now notice how my leaves are tuned to
catch each breath of air

And how I take and fashion it into a
woodland prayer:

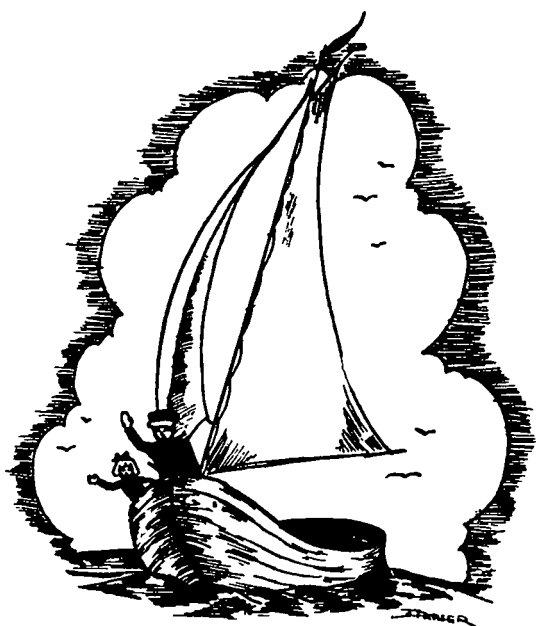
How bees and birds and butterflies come
trooping at my call

While perfume of the violet goes drifting
over all.

So if, each time you're in the woods, you
listen more and more

You'll learn, perhaps, dear little one, just
what the trees are for."

'bout SEA CAPTAINS



WE'D heard about his telescope, and
climbed the zig-zag way
That led up to his cabin, overlooking
Moonlight Bay.
He called his house "Duncruzin", 'cause
he'd made his home ashore,
This doughty old sea captain who would
sail the seas no more.
He spoke to us and told us of the wonders
he had seen—

Of strange things he'd encountered in the
places he had been,
He seemed to speak so longingly of his old
home—the sea,—
But did admit how heartless and how cruel
it could be.
He talked of love and laughter and the joy
of doing right
And as he spoke, it seemed to me, his face
grew all a-light!
He seemed so full of living 'tho' his sailing
days had ceased
His life,—though far to westward,—kept its
vision toward the East!
He said: "Each morn starts life anew, as
each new day's begun;"
And so he built his cottage so he'd face the
morning sun.
He talked about "perspective". I'm not
sure what it's about.
From what he said, it's something folks
can't get along without.
He said if we had that, we'd think a whole
lot more of others—

That God is Father to us all, and so all men
are brothers;

And if we just remembered that, we wouldn't
fight or fuss

But we would do to them, just what we'd
have them do to us;

And folks would all be happy, and 'fore
long they'd surely find

God meant us for one family,—the family
of Mankind!

Oh dear! I wish, when I grow up, I'd have
“perspective” too.

I think that I'd be happy and do lots of good.
Don't you?

'bout BEES



I WATCHED a little insect that looked something like a fly:

It lit upon a clover-bloom as I was passing by.

It peeped into the flowerets each by each,
as one who begs,

And as it crawled I noticed yellow bunches
on its legs.

I saw one on a pumpkin flower a little while
before,—

It may be that's where this one got its
yellow-legged store.

I followed when it flew away into a near-by
bog
And saw it enter with some more into a
hollow log.
As none of them seemed frightened I
decided I would stay
And see what they were doing and to watch
them at their play.
I wanted to get nearer so I thought that I
would stand
A little closer to the log. Then I put out
my hand
And touched one on the wing tip and it
ruffled up its tail
And jumped up on my finger where it's
swollen, by the nail.
I don't know just what happened but my
finger got so hot
And hurt me oh so awful; and it swelled up
quite a lot.
I scampered home to auntie so that I
might let her see
Just what had caused the swelling. "Why,"
she said: "That was a bee!"
And then she said: "When'er you see a
strange thing in the wild
Be sure you know just what it is, before
you touch it, child!"

'bout FORGETTING



I KNOW a girl who has some pets;
But sometimes she forgets, forgets
About their care, and so she lets
Them suffer. My, oh my!

She has a little spotted pup;
A cat that drinks out of a cup;

But, without food, they cannot sup:
And, sometimes, how they cry!

I know she loves them, 'cause I see
She takes them both upon her knee—
They seem as happy as can be—
But once I heard them sigh!

She sometimes fails to put away
Her things; but leaves them where they lay,
And, oftentimes I've heard them say:
"She'll 'catch on', by and by!"

I'm 'shamed to give you her address;
Don't even like to have you guess.
To cut it short, I'll just confess—
That little girl is I!

'bout BIRTHDAYS

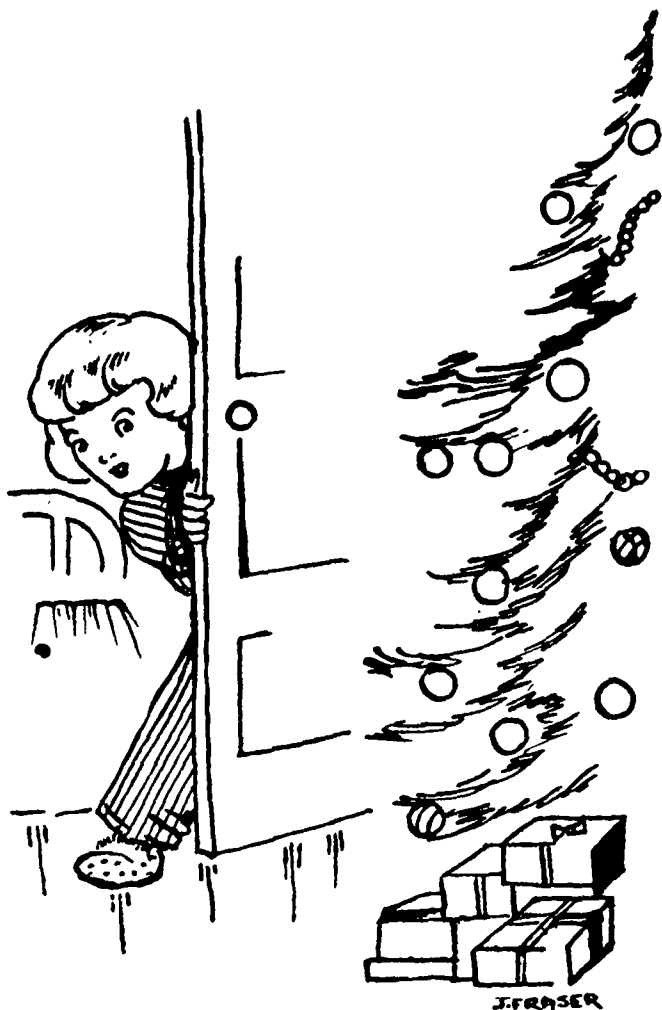


I 'MEMBER how,—long, long ago,
When I was young;—I didn't know
Why birthdays always seemed so grand.
I'm older now. I understand.
When I was younger,—only seven,—
My birthday seemed almost like heaven!
I'm older now. I'm almost eight:
It's easier to get things straight.

You see, I heard my Auntie say
To Uncle Fred, the other day.
About my birthday: "We must get
Something that's lovely for our pet."
"She'll soon be eight. I'd have her know
That we rejoice to see her grow;
That she shall always have our love;
T'will make her eager to improve."

And so, I know, without a doubt,—
T'is love that brings it all about.

'bout CHRISTMAS-TIME



'BOUT Christmas-time, it seems to me,
Things are as different as can be.
There is a feel of jollity
As sleigh-bells chime.

I notice, every little while,
That faces break out in a smile;—
But oh, how kiddies are on trial
At Christmas-time!

'Bout Christmas-time, where folks were
sour

They seem to have a new-found power
That keeps them pleasant by the hour
When sleigh-bells chime.

I find I do the things I should:—
I'm even careful of my food;—
But oh, how kiddies must be good
At Christmas-time!

'Bout Christmas-time, 'most every day
Brings fresh delight into our play.
It even sounds a different way
When sleigh-bells chime.

I wish that joy, without a tear,
Might shield us from the wrongs we fear,
And keep us sweet through all the year
'Til Christmas-time!

SWINGING



UP, with a rush, to the top of the world,
Down, with a swoop that is stronger!
Tighten your breath as your body is whirled,
Swifter and farther and longer!
Isn't it fine we can go for a trip;
Don't need a horse or a train or a ship;
Upward and downward, a rise and a dip,
Swinging our way through the world!

Upward and downward we travel the world
Oh, what a glorious motion!
Forward and backward your body is hurled
Fiercely as storm on the ocean;
Hold fast the ropes as you speed through
the air,
Nothing's to fear if you keep the seat square—
Never a trouble, a worry or care,
Winging our way through the world!

THE MEADOW LARK



YOU can hear him in the country, from
the dawning until dark,

In city, too, from boulevard and edges of
the park;

His melodies descending in a lovely,
spiralled arc;—

The lilting, whistled yodel of the friendly
meadow lark!

Ee-elly-lelly-elley-O!

His music mingles nicely, if the listener
will hark

To kindred sounds of nature, and with
thoughtful care, will mark

The mooing of the cattle and the watch-
dog's distant bark;—

This cheery, lifting yodel of the friendly
meadow lark.

Ee-elly-lelly-elly-lelly-O!

He's the oddest wee musician: doesn't seem
to have a spark

Of melodic intuition—as to when to go, or
park—

But even if, to catch his song, you wait from
dawn to dark

You'll thrill to hear the yodel of the friendly
meadow lark!

Ee-elly-lelly-elly-lelly-O!

STARS



THE waves were lapping softly on the
shore and it was night;
The campfire flickered feebly to provide
our only light;
And as we sat there talking, someone
mentioned by and by,
How bright the stars were shining in their
places in the sky.
Then we all started wondering if Heaven
was above,

Or was it just where people were,—
 wherever there was love?

And no one seemed to care so much, and no
 one thought it odd

That Heaven is located just wherever there
 is God;

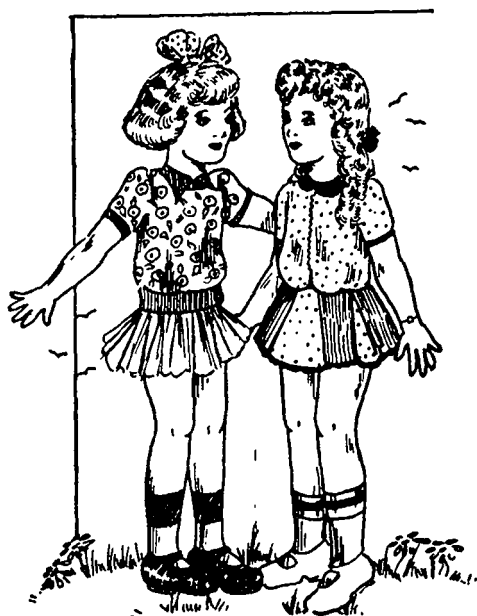
And that, because God's everywhere, the
 feeling grew and grew

That heaven is within us,—'specially if
 we want it so;

And as we watched the bright-eyed stares
 a-winking up above,

We somehow felt persuaded, and we knew,
 that God is love.

TWO LITTLE GIRLS



ONCE on a time there were two little girls:

Sisters they were, if you please;
One of them had the most beautiful curls,
Hanging in ringlets and spirals and whirls;
Lovely pink cheeks like the rose that unfurls
Satiny buds to the breeze.

Brown was her hair with a hazel-nut sheen;
Eyes clear and bright as the fawn;

Pouty red lips of the like rarely seen;
Pearly white teeth peeping out from
 between;
Dear dimpled chin and the nose of a queen;
Smile sweet and fair as the dawn!

One was a quiet demure little miss,
Winsome and thoughtful and kind;
Seemed like a constant creator of bliss,
Quieting tears with a pat and a kiss;
Wholesome and charming, such beauty as
 this,—
Beauty of spirit and mind!

Isn't it fine we need worry no whit
Over the features we bear?
Beauty of soul is so charmingly knit,
Hope's brightest fires by its smiles may be
 lit.
Beauty of character needs not to fit
Beauty of eyes or of hair!

THE BLUEBIRD'S WING

II SAW him first about the time the robins
build their nests

And all the world is happy, as their cheery
song suggests;

What time another call was heard, from
pasture, field and park—

The liquid, fluted yodel of the joyous
meadow lark.

I heard his throaty warble in the tree-tops
near the lawn

Last spring-time, as a morning rubbed its
sleepy eyes, at dawn.

I saw his sky-blue splendor as he hopped
from bough to bough;

And wish that I could see and hear the little
fellow now.

It's just a simple story, that in justice,
should be told,

A common tragedy indeed, that's very,
very old;

The story of a blue-bird that forgot to be
afraid

And, having trusted, never dreamed that he
should be betrayed.

Perhaps the bird-bath stood too near the
margin of the wood.

Perhaps he kept no look-out, as, of course
a bluebird should.

But, as he safely ate and drank, it's little
wonder that

He failed to heed the danger from the
prowling alley-cat.

Spring melted into summer and the summer
into fall

And autumn spread its magic cloak of
beauty over all.

The birds had done their mating and their
families were grown;

And some were gathering for flight; and
some of them had flown.

I heard my bluebird chuckle as his folk
prepared to pack;

Then missed his happy warble; but I
thought he would be back.

And then, one morn, when leaves had put
their colored clothing on,

I found a bluebird's tattered wing, a-lying
on the lawn!



